

Holiday Food Safety

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One of my favorite things about the holidays are all the delicious foods. Follow these tips to help prevent food poisoning, or foodborne illnesses during the holiday season.

Stay Away from Temperature "Danger Zone"

Bacteria can grow very quickly between the temperatures of 40°F and 140°F.

This holiday, don't forget to keep your hot foods hot and your cold foods cold. A general recommendation is to refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours to be safe. Make sure your refrigerator is set under 40°F and your freezer is set below 0°F.



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Serve Thoroughly Cooked Food

Chicken, turkey, seafood, and eggs are notorious for causing food poisoning if they are not thoroughly cooked. Have a food thermometer ready-to-go to monitor the internal temperature of your foods while cooking them. You can reference the chart below for more information.

Type	Internal Temperature (°F)
Beef, pork, veal, lamb	160
Turkey, chicken	165
Steaks, roasts, chops Rest time: 3 minutes	145
All Poultry (breasts, whole bird, legs, thighs, wings, ground poultry, giblets, and stuffing)	165
Fresh pork, including fresh ham Rest time: 3 minutes	145
Precooked ham (to reheat) Note: Reheat cooked hams packaged in USDA-inspected plants to 140°F	165
Eggs	Cook until yolk and white are firm
Egg dishes (such as frittata, quiche)	160
Leftovers and casseroles	165
Fish with fins	145 or cook until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork
Shrimp, lobster, crab, and scallops	Cook until flesh is pearly or white, and opaque
Clams, oysters, mussels	Cook until shells open during cooking

Keep Foods Separated

Separate chicken, turkey, seafood, and eggs from other foods in your refrigerator. We recommend storing these foods in containers or bags to prevent them from leaking on to other foods. You can protect the eggs by keeping them in the original cartons that you bought them in.

Proper Thawing

The best way of thawing meats are in the refrigerator or in a sink full of cold water (change water every 30 minutes). Do not thaw meats on the counter.



Hand Hygiene

The best way to prevent illness is to ensure you are washing your hands. It is recommended to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- After handling pet food or pet treats or touching pets
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After touching garbage
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing